GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:3856
ANSWERED ON:19.04.2005
UNILATERAL TARIFF CONCESSIONS
Patil Shri Balasaheb Vikhe

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to extend Unilateral Tariff Concessions to least developed countries;

(b) if so, the main objectives thereof;

(c) whether agricultural items are also proposed to be included in these concessions;

(d) if so, its likely impact on Indian agricultural items; and

(e) the details of the countries providing such concessions ?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI E.V.K.S. ELANGOVAN)

(a) & (b): Least developed countries are some of the poorest and most underdeveloped countries in the world. India offers various forms of assistance to these countries to aid their economic development. India already grants deeper tariff concessions on a wider range of products to the least developed countries participating in preferential trading arrangements, such as SAARC Preferential Trading Arrangement (SAPTA). At present no decision on granting unilateral tariff preference to all least developed countries has been taken.

(c) & (d): Do not arise, as at present no decision on granting Unilateral Tariff Preferences has been taken.

(e): Several countries are providing unilateral tariff concessions to least developed countries. These include almost all the developed countries such as the US, EC, Switzerland, Australia, New Zealand and Canada. Amongst developing countries China, South Korea and South Africa are also providing unilateral tariff concessions.